

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 305924

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: (OVIP, LI, TOLBERT, A.B.)

SUBJECT: A.B. TOLBERT CALLS ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE

1. A.B. TOLBERT, CHAIRMAN OF THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE LIBERIAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND ELDEST SON OF PRESIDENT TOLBERT, CALLED AT HIS REQUEST ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE DECEMBER 21 FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE-HALF HOUR. IN HIS REMARKS TO MOOSE, TOLBERT FIRST COMPLIMENTED THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION FOR ITS POLICIES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. HE THEN LAUNCHED INTO A REQUEST FOR INCREASED DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO LIBERIA, USING THE FAMILIAR EXAMPLES OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE PROFITTED FROM THEIR RELATIONS WITH FORMER METROPOLES WHICH IGNORE LIBERIA BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF ANY SUCH TIES. HE SUGGESTED IN PASSING THAT SPECIAL CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO A FIVE-YEAR PROGRAM TO PUT LIBERIA ON ITS "INFRASTRUCTURAL FEET", THUS MAKING IT MORE ATTRACTIVE FOR US BUSINESS TO LOCATE IN LIBERIA AND BENEFITTING BOTH COUNTRIES. HE EXPRESSED
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PARTICULAR INTEREST IN IMPROVING LIBERIA'S ELECTRIC AND WATER SUPPLY, THE FORMER BY THE BUILDING OF HYDRO-ELECTRIC PLANTS. HE ASKED FOR WHATEVER INDIRECT SUPPORT THE US COULD OFFER TO ENCOURAGE THE TRANSFER OF OAU HEADQUARTERS FROM ADDIS ABABA TO MONROVIA, AND EXPRESSED HIS COUNTRY'S INTEREST IN EXPLOITING ITS GOLD, URANIUM, DIAMOND, BAUXITE,

MANGANESE AND PETROLEUM RESERVES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH US FIRMS.

2. IN HIS REMARKS, MOOSE STATED THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH LIBERIA AND HOW PLEASED THE US IS TO ASSIST IN LIBERIA'S DEVELOPMENT. HE NOTED WITH APPROBATION THE RECENT MEETING OF GOL OFFICIALS WITH POTENTIAL US BUSINESS INVESTORS HELD AT USUN, AND SAID THAT IT IS HIS INTENTION TO ACQUAINT MORE US BUSINESSMEN WITH INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN AFRICA, PARTICULARLY COUNTRIES LIKE LIBERIA. IN CORRECTING ONE CONCERN TOLBERT HAD EXPRESSED ABOUT REPORTS BEING CIRCULATED IN THE DEPARTMENT PURPORTING WIDESPREAD CORRUPTION IN LIBERIA, MOOSE STATED THAT NO ONE IN STATE DOUBTS THE PERSONAL RECTITUDE OF PRESIDENT TOLBERT. HE SAID THAT THE US WILL MAINTAIN ITS AID LEVEL TO LIBERIA AT LEAST AS HIGH AS IT HAS BEEN IN THE PAST, AND COMMENTED THAT IN SPITE OF SERIOUS AID CUTS WORLDWIDE HE HAD JUST SIGNED A PAPER STATING LIBERIA IS ONE OF 2-3 COUNTRIES IN AFRICA WHERE THERE SHALL BE NO REDUCTIONS. IN CLOSING, MOOSE ASKED THAT HIS BEST WISHES BE EXTENDED TO TOLBERT'S FATHER.

3. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING, TOLBERT PRESENTED MOOSE WITH A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF DOCUMENTS, LARGELY PUBLIC PAPERS OF PRESIDENT TOLBERT. HE ALSO COMMENTED THAT JONAS SAVIMBI OF UNITA HAD VISITED MONROVIA TWICE
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THIS YEAR AS HIS GUEST, AND THAT THEY HAD PRAYED TOGETHER FOR A VICTORY WHICH HE FELT WAS INCREASINGLY NEAR.

4. TOLBERT'S VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES BEGAN IN EARLY DECEMBER WHEN HE ATTENDED THE AFL/CIO CONVENTION IN LOS ANGELES. DURING THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 12 HE VISITED OKLAHOMA AND KENTUCKY, APPARENTLY AS THE GUEST OF THEIR GOVERNORS. IN ADDITION TO HIS CALL ON MOOSE, TOLBERT MET WITH REPRESENTATIVE PARREN MITCHELL OF THE BLACK CAUCUS ON DECEMBER 19 AND AMBASSADOR ANDREW YOUNG IN NEW YORK ON DECEMBER 20. HE WILL MEET WITH AID ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR AFRICA GOLER BUTCHER ON DECEMBER 22. HE HAD BEEN ACTIVE IN CALLING ON A NUMBER OF PRIVATE US FIRMS, PARTICULARLY OIL COMPANIES SUCH AS EXXON AND GULF TO INTEREST THEM IN EXPLOITING LIBERIA'S PETROLEUM DEPOSITS TOLBERT PLANSTO REMAIN IN THE US THROUGH NEW YEAR'S DAY, VISITING TENNESSEE AMONG OTHER THINGS, AND THEN RETURN TO MONROVIA ON JANUARY 6 VIA EUROPE. VANCE

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